



Psychological Screening Program

Established in 1985, the California Department of Human Resources' Psychological Screening Program (PSP) has become one of the largest and most diverse psychological screening programs in the nation.

Before appointment into any peace officer position, California law and regulations mandate that all candidates must first be certified free from psychological conditions and factors that might pose a risk to the safe and effective performance of their duties. The State of California has over 90 peace officer job classifications, including Correctional Peace Officer, and California Highway Patrol, that require pre-employment psychological certification. PSP serves 33 departments with independent and highly professional psychological screening evaluations of approximately 6,000 candidates each year.

The PSP emphasizes adherence to the highest standards in order to ensure a service that protects the interest of the public, while at the same time respecting the rights of individual candidates.

Mission of the PSP

The mission of the PSP is to protect the integrity of public safety, while safeguarding the rights of the individual candidates undergoing sensitive screening for peace officer duties. Each candidate is treated fairly and professionally, and each case decided without prejudice or impingement on the dignity of the candidate. PSP arrives at the most reasonable professional assessment of a candidate's psychological suitability for appointment as a peace officer for the State of California.

The PSP Team

The PSP is a unique team composed of skilled staff and licensed Psychologists who together, coordinate the various aspects of the psychological screening process of prospective peace officer candidates for our contracted agencies.

PSP Services

The PSP provides pre-employment psychological screening of all candidates for State positions designated as peace officer empowered. Pursuant to the requirements of Government Code section 1031(f), Penal Code section 13601(a), California Code of Regulations sections 599.971 et seq., and in accordance with Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) (<http://www.post.ca.gov/>) Commission regulations, psychological screening is intended to identify those individuals, who because of mental or emotional conditions and/or maladaptive personality characteristics, are unable to perform peace officer duties in a safe and effective manner.

The Psychological Screening Program services include the following:

- Computerized scoring of written assessment materials Case Processing including tracking, reviewing, and decisions
- Coordinated scheduling of 1st and/or 2nd interviews for in and out-of-state candidates at various convenient locations in the Northern, Central and Southern California regions
- Face to face evaluation interviews conducted by qualified professional contract and staff psychologists for each Peace Officer candidate
- Timely and secure psychological screening results provided to employing agencies and departments
- Confidential testing assessment materials supplied to client departments
- Yearly contract renewals with client departments
- Expedites available on approved cases
- Proctor training for all client departments

the Psychological Screening Process

Overview of the PSP Process

1. Candidate profile is received in the PSP from client department and a PSP case file is established.
2. Case is reviewed to ascertain need for additional information, including treatment records. Records are ordered when applicable.
3. The PSP contacts candidates to schedule an interview within their geographic location and corresponding region.
4. Interviewing psychologist conducts pre-employment psychological interview and provides written recommendation of candidate's suitability to the PSP.
5. The PSP staff psychologists render determination and decision to clear or disqualify the candidate in the psychological screening process.
 - Notice of completion sent to hiring department; or
 - Notice of disqualification sent to hiring department and candidate.

Guide to PSP Process

The PSP provides two guides to understanding the process:

- The Candidate Information Sheet (/Documents/psp-candidate-information.pdf) provides details related to the process, interview, and candidate responsibilities.
- The PSP flowchart (/Documents/psp-flowchart.pdf) is a visual guide to the process.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. How long does it take to get scheduled for a psychological interview?

Provided no additional information is required, the Psychological Screening Program (PSP) schedules a candidate for interview approximately four to six weeks after receipt of the completed written assessment materials from the hiring department.

2. How are the oral psychological interviews scheduled?

The PSP contacts candidates to schedule oral psychological interviews via phone and written appointment notification.

3. Why do I need to obtain my treatment records?

Based on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) Selection Standards Commission Regulation 9055, psychological interviews must cover issues arising from review of written assessments, background issues, treatment records (if available), and other relevant information.

4. What if I have more than one provider, should I use one Authorization to Release Confidential Records Form?

One Authorization to Release Confidential Records Form must be utilized for each provider.

5. What if I cannot locate my provider(s) to obtain the treatment records, my treatment records are no longer available, or my time is running out in getting the requested records?

Contact the PSP directly for more information.

6. My provider has sent me the treatment records. Can I send them directly to your office?

Contact the PSP directly for more information.

7. How do I prepare for my oral psychological interview?

Candidates must allow a minimum of one hour for the interview; arrive on time; and bring a valid photo ID and appointment notice (if available). Candidates are encouraged to visit the PSP Testing Locations section to obtain additional appointment location information.

8. What should I wear for my oral psychological interview?

Candidates are encouraged to wear attire appropriate for a job interview.

9. What if I need to withdraw from the psychological screening process?

Candidates must immediately notify the PSP and the hiring department.

10. What if I missed my interview, can I re-schedule?

Candidates must immediately notify the PSP and the hiring department. The PSP can re-schedule a candidate for the next available appointment only with authorization from hiring department.

11. How am I notified of the results of my psychological screening?

The PSP provides written notification to candidates when Peace Officer Psychological Evaluation (POPE) screening results in disqualification. The hiring department contacts the candidates to complete the remaining component of the hiring process when POPE screening results in clearance. If you have not been contacted regarding your psychological screening results, contact the hiring department for more information.

12. Why is there a need for a Second Opinion interview?

It is very common for candidates to undergo Second Opinion interviews for a more detailed and in-depth evaluation.

13. What if I was disqualified and would like to appeal the decision?

Candidates may appeal the decision by writing to the State Personnel Board's Appeals Division (<http://spb.ca.gov/appeals/info.cfm>) .

14. Can PSP recommend a qualified psychologist to conduct an Outside Evaluation?

The PSP does not recommend psychologists for outside evaluations.

15. What if I need to change my address?

Candidates must complete the change of address form (</Documents/PSP-Change-of-Contact-Information.pdf>) .

PSP Resources

Change of Address Form

Candidate Information Sheet (</Documents/psp-candidate-information.pdf>)

Peace Officers Standards and Training (POST) Website (<http://www.post.ca.gov/>)

Contact

Steve Caldwell, (<mailto:Robin.Henry@calhr.ca.gov>) Program Manager

Psychological Screening Program

1515 S Street, Sacramento CA 95811

Toll Free 888-421-6631

Main Line 916-323-4411

Fax 916-324-0480

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